

Medicines for Self Care

Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group supports any GP practice that decides to reduce their prescribing of medicines which have limited clinical value or are more suitable for patients to buy for themselves.

These medicines include:

- Pain killers for minor aches and pains
- Soluble pain killers **(because of high salt content)**
- Hay fever preparations
- Cough and cold remedies
- Nasal decongestants (and Sterimar)
- Tonic, vitamin, and health supplements
- Antiperspirants
- Homeopathic remedies
- Treatments for non-serious constipation or diarrhoea
- Ear wax removers **(a few drops of olive oil is just as good as anything on prescription)**
- Treatments for minor facial spots
- Threadworm tablets
- Lozenges, throat sprays, mouthwashes, gargles and toothpastes
- Slimming preparations **(except within national guidelines)**
- Creams, gels, oils and dressings for **minor** sprains, sports injuries and scars
- Indigestion remedies **for occasional use**
- Creams for bruising, tattoos, varicose veins and scars
- Nappy rash / barrier creams
- Hair removing creams
- Head lice lotions and shampoos **(wet combing is recommended)**
- Athletes' foot creams and powders
- Topical treatments for vaginal thrush
- Treatments for fungal nail infections
- Moisturisers and bath additives for **minor** dry skin conditions
- Travel medicines
- Foods and toilet preparations **except where clinically indicated** e.g. gluten-free cakes, cake mixes & luxury biscuits; sip feeds; ready-made thickened juices; soya milks and sun creams.

Why? This decision has been taken because:

- Many of these products are cheap to buy and are readily available along with advice from pharmacies, as well as shops and supermarkets (which are often open until late)
- Some of them do not actually work very well, e.g. cough syrups
- In Somerset we spent **almost £4 million** last year on these medicines. This money could be better spent on treating more serious conditions such as cancer and heart disease.

In some circumstances your doctor can still prescribe these medicines on the NHS if they believe a true clinical need exists.

For more information from the National Health Service on conditions, treatments, local services and healthy living please visit the NHS Choices website:
www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx

<http://www.selfcareforum.org/>

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